GUIDING PRINCIPLES
Trinity Church, Santa Monica, California

1. INTRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION

This Guiding Principles Manual (GPM) contains all of the current Guiding Principles adopted by the Elder Servant Leadership Board of Trinity Church (hereafter referred to as the Board or the Elders) as of November 3rd, 2013.

This manual is used to govern the ministry direction of Trinity Church.

1.0 Reasons for Adoption
- Efficiency of having all ongoing Guiding Principles and policies in one place.
- The ability to quickly orient new Elders, Staff, Ministry Team Leaders, and interested Church Members to current Guiding Principles.
- The elimination of redundant or conflicting policies of the past.
- Ease of reviewing current Guiding Principles when considering new issues.
- Providing clear, proactive Guiding Principles to guide the Senior Pastor and Staff.
- Modeling an effective approach to church governance that other churches might use.

1.1 Consistency
Each Guiding Principle in this document is expected to be consistent with the Law, the Articles of Incorporation, and the Church Bylaws, all of which have precedence over these Guiding Principles. All standing Guiding Principles shall be included or referred to in this document, except for time-limited or procedural-only Board decisions (approving the Minutes, electing an officer, etc., which are recorded in regular Elder Board Minutes). The Senior Pastor is responsible for developing organizational and administrative policies and procedures that are consistent with this GPM. The use of the word “Board” herein refers to the Elder Board.

1.2 Transition
Whether adopted part by part or as a complete document, as soon as some version of the GPM is voted on as the “one voice” of the Elders, those Guiding Principles are deemed to supersede any past Guiding Principles that might be found in old Minutes or old editions of the Guiding Principles unless a prior Elder resolution or contract obligates Trinity Church (hereafter referred to as TC or the Church) with regard to a specific matter.

1.3 Changes
- As a living document, these Guiding Principles are to be frequently reviewed and refined by the Elders during their scheduled meetings. The Senior Pastor helps the Elder Board formulate new language in the GPM by distributing proposed changes to the Elders. When language is recommended for deletion, it is shown in strike-through format. Proposed new language is underlined. Each section with a proposed change will be preceded by the # sign to help readers quickly locate proposed changes.
- Any change to this GPM must be approved by the full Elder Board. Proposed changes may be submitted by any Elder, as well as by the Senior Pastor. In some instances a new Guiding Principle formulation can be assigned to an appointed taskforce of Elders. Whenever new Guiding Principles are adopted, a new GPM should be dated, printed, and quickly made available to the Elders and Staff and available for review
by interested parties. Previous versions should be stored electronically by the Church Clerk for future reference if needed.

1.4 Specificity
Each new Guiding Principle shall be drafted to fit in the appropriate place within the GPM. Conceptually, policies should be drafted from the "outside in"; i.e., the broadest policy statement should be presented first, then the next broadest, etc., down to the level of detail that the Elder Board finds appropriate for effective implementation.

1.5 Oversight Responsibility
The Elders shall be responsible to see that these Guiding Principles are used to govern the ministry direction for Trinity Church. The Senior Pastor is accountable to the Elders for effective and timely implementation of these principles. The Senior Pastor is responsible to report both progress and setbacks in writing to the Elders according to an agreed upon reporting schedule. When a questionable interpretation of a Guiding Principle might arise, the benefit of the doubt will be extended to the Senior Pastor regarding the procedures taken to implement a principle.

1.6 Maintenance of Policies
The Elder Board Secretary shall ensure that the current GPM is on file in a three-ring notebook in the TC office with all other standing documents. These documents are available for review by any interested person. A copy of all church documents will also be published on the church website. The Church Clerk is responsible to maintain the GPM and provide updated copies to the Elders whenever the Guiding Principles change, or upon request.

2. MISSION PRINCIPLES

2.0 Comprehensive Mission Statement
Trinity Church exists to glorify God by preaching the Gospel, teaching the Word of God and equipping all believers to be effective in the ministry so that each person may become a fully committed follower of Jesus Christ, thereby fulfilling the Great Commission.

TRINITY CHURCH EXISTS TO LIFT UP CHRIST THROUGH:

2.1 Praising God in Worship (Corporate Worship)
A significant priority shall be placed on worshiping God in directed corporate worship and the encouragement of individual expressions of worship in truth and in Spirit. Worship will be encouraged in a way that embraces all ages and reaches across cultural barriers to lift up Jesus in a reverent way.

2.2 Bringing People to Christ (Evangelism)
A significant priority shall be reaching people who need to be welcomed into the Body of Christ by receiving His free gift of salvation. Considerable resources will be directed to engage our community and beyond with relevant ministry strategies to reach the lost with the transforming message of Jesus Christ.

2.3 Building Mature Disciples (Christian Growth)
A significant priority shall be helping believers to become grounded in God’s Word and sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s refining and directing in their lives. We will endeavor to nurture the biblical maturing of believers in all aspects of their lives, encouraging them to become ever more like Jesus Christ.
2.4 Gathering Believers Together (Fellowship)
A significant priority will be placed on maintaining the unity of the Body of Christ by embracing biblical principles and standards of relationship, forgiveness, and encouragement. Fellowship will be encouraged across ministry circles for the mutual edification of believers.

2.5 Sending People Into Service (Utilizing Spiritual Gifts)
A significant priority shall be equipping and deploying each believer for a significant ministry by developing their God-given gifts in ministries in our church, our city, our region and the outer reaches of the world.

2.6 Envisioning Future Growth (Vision)
A significant priority shall be to forecast a vision and establish goals that would influence the growth of the church in the community.

3. **LEADERSHIP BOUNDARY PRINCIPLES**

3.0 Leadership Standard
Church leadership must meet a biblically based standard that is agreed upon by the Elder Board.

3.1 Leadership Integrity
Persons in leadership will endeavor to maintain their personal walk with God, attend church functions regularly, and model a Spirit-led life.

3.2 Comprehensive Boundary Statement
The Senior Pastor and Church Board shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unbiblical, unlawful, imprudent, or unethical.

3.3 Component: Biblical and Moral Integrity
With regard to the teaching, leadership, and membership of the Church, the Senior Pastor and Church Board shall not fail to uphold the Church’s Statement of Faith and the high standard of biblical teaching and morality that it implies.

3.4 Component: Financial Planning and Budgeting
Consistent with §4.4, financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board’s Mission Principles, risk financial jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a multiyear plan.

4. **PASTORAL LEADERSHIP BOUNDARY PRINCIPLES**

4.0 Component: Treatment of Constituents
With respect to interactions with constituents or potential constituents, the Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy. Therefore, the senior pastor shall establish guidelines, policies and procedures providing for the safety and dignity of all who participate in the ministries of TC.

4.1 Component: Compensation and Benefits
With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contracted workers, and volunteers, the Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow jeopardy of fiscal integrity or public image.
4.2 Component: Treatment of staff
With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Senior Pastor shall not cause or allow conditions that are unfair or undignified.

4.3 Component: Communication and Support to the Board
The Senior Pastor shall not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

4.3.1 Detail: Names of Specific Individuals and/or Their Tasks for Funding
Special offerings are taken for specific mission projects during the year. Occasionally, specific people are sent out from Trinity for short-term mission tasks. Trinity allows contributions to be given towards these people and/or tasks. Additionally, contributions are donated for use by people where their need is in line with Trinity’s religious endeavors. In order to have a record on file as to who is allowed to receive funding, the Senior Pastor shall identify, for elder meeting minutes, such people and their work effort prior to donations and/or funding taking place.

4.4 Component: Financial Condition and Activities
With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Senior Pastor shall not allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Board priorities established in Mission Principles and TC’s Bylaws/Constitution, or exceed by more than 10 percent the established annual budget total as approved by membership vote at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church, or as subsequently revised by membership vote.

4.5 Component: Emergency Senior Pastor Succession
In order to protect the Board from the sudden loss of Senior Pastor services, the Senior Pastor shall have no fewer than two ministry leadership members (either paid staff or volunteers), as approved by the Board, who are familiar with Board and Senior Pastor issues and processes.

4.6 Component: Policy and Process for Volunteers
The Senior Pastor shall be responsible to establish policies and procedures that are consistent with biblically based principles for all volunteers who participate in the ministry of TC to ensure their spiritual, ethical, moral and physical safety.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES

5.0 Comprehensive Accountability Statement
The responsibility of the Board before God in reaching those who need to be led to Christ and nurtured in Him, on behalf of people in Santa Monica, the surrounding region, and its mission outreach beyond the community, is to see that TC, through the leadership of its Senior Pastor: (1) achieves the fulfillment of its Mission Principles, and (2) avoids violation of its Boundary Principles.

5.1 Component: Stewardship to Christ for Those He Calls Us to Serve
The Board shall maintain an active connection to the “moral ownership” of the Church: Christ and the people He has called His church to serve.
5.1.1 Detail: Community Research and Public Relations
The Board will invest resources periodically to enhance its understanding of the needs of people in the community and to enhance the Church’s reputation of service to the community.

5.1.2 Detail: Church Feedback and Assessment
The Board will collect input and feedback from Church Members and Attenders to better understand how to minister to and serve them in biblically relevant ways.

5.1.3 Detail: Devotion to Prayer and the Word of God
Under the teaching and guidance of the Senior Pastor, the Board will continually seek the wisdom and leading of Christ as the Lord of the Church. To this end, significant attention will be given to prayer and study of Scripture as a group.

5.2 Component: Discipline of the Process of the Board
The Board shall conduct itself with discipline and integrity with regard to its own process of governance.

5.2.1 Detail: Board Style
The Board will govern with an emphasis on (1) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation, (2) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (3) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (4) clear distinction of Board and Staff roles, (5) collective rather than individual decisions, (6) future rather than past or present, and (7) proactively rather than reactively.

5.2.2 Detail: Board Job Description
The essential functions of the Board are a connection to the people served, the definition of Guiding Principles, and monitoring of the Senior Pastor’s performance. In addition to these three essentials, the Board shall exercise authority granted to it in the Bylaws and not delegated to the Senior Pastor.

5.2.3 Detail: Board Member Codes of Conduct
The Board commits itself and its members to the following codes of conduct:

a. Members of the Board must represent un-conflicted loyalty to the interests of Christ regarding those whom He has called His church to serve (Matthew 28:18-20). This loyalty supersedes any personal or group interest among, or outside, consumers of the Church’s services. A Board Member must disclose any fiduciary conflict of interest and withdraw from any decision making affected by it.

b. Members of the Board must honor the principles and decisions of the Board acting as a whole. They may not foster dissent or attempt to exercise individual authority over the Staff or the organization except as explicitly stated in the Guiding Principles.

c. Members of the Board must respect the confidentiality of sensitive Board issues and must avoid facilitating gossip or other "triangulation" against the practice of direct, biblical resolution.
5.2.4 Detail: Responsibility of the Chairperson for Integrity of Process
The Chairperson enforces the integrity and fulfillment of the Board’s process, including the monitoring of the Senior Pastor’s performance. The Chairperson is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the Guiding Principles as he/she acts to ensure the integrity of the Board’s and Senior Pastor’s vision.

5.2.5 Detail: Responsibility of the Senior Pastor for Visionary Leadership
The Senior Pastor has the responsibility, authority, and accountability to serve as the primary leader of the Church at every level: Congregation, Board, and Staff. With respect to the Board, the Senior Pastor will inform the Board on all actions except for monitoring the Senior Pastor’s performance. If a question of process arises with regard to the Bylaws or Guiding Principles of the Church, the Senior Pastor will defer to the judgment of the Board Chairperson. The Chairperson shall not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

5.2.6 Detail: Use of Board Committees
Board committees, if used, will be assigned so as to support the Board’s decisions, and never to interfere with the delegation from the Board to the Senior Pastor or with the work of the Staff.

5.2.7 Detail: Cost of Governance
The Board will invest amply in its own governance capacity through training, consultation, research mechanisms, and meeting costs.

5.3 Component: Monitoring the Annual Performance of the Senior Pastor
The Board’s sole official connection to the operating organization of the Church, its achievement, and conduct shall be through the Senior Pastor. The Board will instruct the Senior Pastor through written principles that prescribe the mission to be achieved and establish the boundaries to be avoided, allowing the Senior Pastor to use any reasonable interpretation of these principles.

5.3.1 Detail: Unity of Control
Only written decisions of the Board acting as a whole are binding on the Senior Pastor.

5.3.2 Detail: Accountability
The Senior Pastor is the Board’s only way to operational achievement and conduct, so all authority and accountability of the Staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is given to the Senior Pastor within the bounds of the Bylaws/Constitution.

5.3.3 Detail: Performance
Reviewing the Senior Pastor’s job performance will be based solely on the only expected Senior Pastor job outputs: the Church’s accomplishment of the Mission Principles and the Church’s operation within the Board’s Boundary Principles.

5.3.4 Detail: Annual Measurable Objectives
The Senior Pastor will be required to write annual measurable objectives each year that correspond to each of the Mission Principles. At least one of these goals for each Mission Principle must project growth in the number of, or depth of understanding of, people who benefit or participate. The Senior Pastor is also to establish a timely deadline for publication of Trinity’s Annual Report.
5.3.5 Detail: Annual Review
Each year, the Board shall review the results achieved by the Senior Pastor on each of the annual goals. A merit raise, cost of living raise, corrective action, or request for resignation shall be based on the results achieved within the Board’s Boundary Principles.